

Live Q&A Transcript

The Wharton School

Date: April 07, 2016 Time: 9 AM Pacific Place: GMAT Club Chat Room (<http://gmatclub.com/gchat/>)

Presenter: Judith Hodara, Director at Fortuna Admissions (former Wharton Director of Admissions)

Fortuna Admissions Website:

<http://fortunaadmissions.com/>

<http://gmatclub.com/forum/ask-fortuna-admissions-198570.html>

Wharton Forum Discussion: Full Time MBA – Class of 2018

<http://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-all-wharton-applicants-2016-intake-class-of-200055.html>



Happening Now: Live Chat with former Wharton Adcoms and MBA Experts at Fortuna Admissions, Judith Hodara and Brittany Maschal

Topic set by Narenn on Thu Apr 07 2016 21:29:04 GMT+0530 (India Standard Time)

21:30	Narenn	Hello Everyone, Thank you for joining GMAT Club chat session with MBA Admission Consultants at Fortuna Admissions - Judith Silverman Hodara and Brittany Maschal.
21:30	Fortuna_Judith	Good morning everyone. I am looking forward to chatting with you.
21:31	Narenn	I think Brittany has not joined us yet
21:31	Narenn	Previously, both of them have worked in WHARTON's admissions team. Judith was director of Admissions at Wharton and Brittany was member of admissions team.
21:32	Narenn	Welcome Judith! Thanks for joining! Pleasure to have you
21:32	Narenn	Dear Participants: Today Judith and Brittany will answer your questions regarding applications, essays, interviews, and life at Wharton.
21:33	Narenn	There are around 15 chat participants and more are expected to join in couple of minutes, so it is humble request to all participants to adhere to the following rules during chat.
21:33	Fortuna_Judith	I am glad to be here. Brittany is on her way!
21:34	Narenn	1) Ask the questions one by one. Before posting your question, make sure earlier question is answered.
21:34	Narenn	2) Do not ask profile specific questions e.g. What are my chances etc.
21:34	Narenn	3) Keep the question typed in advance and paste them in chat box when earlier question is answered.
21:34	Narenn	This chat is open for Q&A. Please start asking your questions one by one.

21:36	Wharton	I'm planning to apply for Wharton MBA for 2017 Fall intake, for which I will start applying by end of this year. My question (and my worry!) is: I will be 33 when I apply for MBA. Am I too old for Wharton MBA? Will my applications be considered in the first place?
21:38	Fortuna_Judith	Wharton does not have an age limit- so you can feel as if you would have a problem with your application- what you will need to do is to show why it is that you want to go to business school at this stage of your career
21:39	mib_55pqwg	I've heard from other webinars in the past that Wharton looks for analytical people, citing that Wharton typically place strong emphasis on high GMAT scores. Is that true? Or are there other words you would use to describe Wharton other than "analytical"?
21:39	Fortuna_Judith	Apologies but Brittany has a family emergency but she is glad to be in touch after the chat. Sorry about that!
21:40	Narenn	OK..Thanks for letting us know
21:40	Fortuna_Judith	From my experience as past Acting Director of Admissions at Wharton, I would say that Wharton students are also incredibly collaborative. This is a place where you want to be able to learn how to work in teams. So much of the engagement both in and out of the classroom is student driven- and so you may find yourself working with people that you may seem t
21:41	Fortuna_Judith	Have nothing in common with- but that you find common points of interaction. One other thing about Wharton students is that they are incredibly open. These are folks who are really willing to dive in, and to dive deep.
21:41	mereen11	hello Judith and Brittany, thank you for taking time out of your day to provide some insights about Wharton
21:41	Fortuna_Judith	Glad to do so.
21:42	mereen11	for current applicants who have been on the waitlist at Wharton since R1, do you have any recommendations?
21:43	Fortuna_Judith	I am guessing that you have reached out to the waitlist manager to confirm your interest. Has anything happened since you applied that you feel would change how they would look at your application? You may also want to think about having an additional letter of support written .
21:43	mib_cp5a7c	Hi Judith - thanks for taking the time to chat with us today. I am only available to visit Wharton during July/August before Round 1 starts this fall. I understand there is no formal visit program or events on campus put on by admissions during summer. What do you recommend I specifically check out to get a feel for the program and city?
21:46	Fortuna_Judith	There is usually an information session during weekdays in the summer, although they may have changed that schedule. It is admittedly hard to get a feel when there are not that many

		people around. However, I think that you can really ask questions of anyone you meet- sometimes there are students who have summer research program they are working on. Also, the
21:46	Fortuna_Judith	students are back (first years) in early august so you can come and get a feel for the place. I would also suggest that you spend some time in West Philly (where the school is located) as well as in Center City.
21:43	mib_j9bzt	is the Wharton curriculum adjustable according to meet the student needs. Can we choose some electives that we want to.
21:43	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_j9bzt The first year is more set by Wharton, the second year is greater elxecive pased.
21:45	SVT	Hello Judith. Could you share a bit about the advantages/disadvantages of applying as an underrepresented minority? Is there a difference in how a Hispanic permanent resident would be treated as compared to a Hispanic US Citizen?
21:49	Fortuna_Judith	@SVT There is no difference in permanent res. of US citizen . No matter what, you need to reach out to Management Leadership for Tomorrow , an org. that helps under represented students apply. You will want to reach out to the Consortium, which also does the same thing (I do not have the room here to say more sorry) Lastly- get in touch with ALL DIRECTORS OF
21:49	Fortuna_Judith	DIVERSITY at any of the schools you are thinking about. It can be really helpful.
21:45	mereen11	Yes, I have reached out to the adcom indicating my continued interest in attending. I do have some professional updates that I will plan to provide to the adcom as well. Do you feel that a letter of support from another professional (ie. another Manager) or from a current student would be more valuable?
21:47	Fortuna_Judith	@mreen11 You will want to get a letter that can showcase something else about you- so if you go with a current student, you will want to really have them show why it is that you are a good fit and what specifically you could get out of being on campus/ bring to campus
21:47	mib_j9bzt	Hello Judith, can you tell me up what skills you would like to see to overcome the highly represented Indian candidacy. Any higher GMAT expectations etc
21:47	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_j9bzt You are coming from a representative population that is certainly going to have high scores. Beyond that you will want to have really a sense of what makes you different. What is your background story? How did you get here? What special background do you bring to the campus? You want to look at your self not just as a candidate from a certain sub set but as someone who will really impact the campus life.
21:48	alex	Does it help to have current students and/or Wharton alumni write letters of support to the admissions committee (in addition to formal recommendations) to compliment one's application?

21:48	mereen11	great, thank you so much Judith!
21:52	Fortuna_Judith	@alex I generally say to stick to what they ask for. So you do not want to have random current students or alumni send in letters UNLESS you are certain what it is that they will add to your candidacy. Nothing should go in without you being fully aware and engaged with its content.
21:53	mib_j9bzt	I have come from a very different background a language translator, and I do not have any business or professional background. Is that a good thing for the class to have somebody like me to add value and richness in the overall classroom experience
21:55	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_j9bzt You will need to show what you have done that leads you to want to get an MBA and how you are going to use it going forward. The story needs to make sense- so you will want to be able to share how you see yourself moving forward.
21:54	Jothir	Hello, Good morning Judith and hope all is well with Brittany's family. What are the 3 things that admission councils look for in case a candidate has inconsistent GPAs during his / her undergrad years? Also does an older candidate (35 yrs.) pose a significant disadvantage to apply for the program?
21:57	Fortuna_Judith	@Jothir Thank you for your good wishes which I will pass on. You are very kind. If you have an inconsistent GPA its less of an issue the further away you are from undergrad. Is there a pattern? Did you not do well in certain kinds of classes? If they are quant classes you will want to see if there are ways that you can retake them. I would also say that you will have had a lot of experience at work now that you can share in your application, and you would also want to address that inconsistency in your optional essay. You do not want to sweep it under the rug, but explain what was happening at that time.
21:54	mib_55pqwg	What makes for a strong candidate, and what sort of things would make you turn down a candidate right away at the group interview?
21:59	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_55pqwg About 95% of the applicants are admissible to Wharton on the numbers alone. so, you are looking to have a coherent and cohesive story that makes sense and explains where you have been, where you want to go. You need to be able to get the reader of the file on your side from the beginning by having them WANT to root for you in the application process
22:00	Fortuna_Judith	Do you not be afraid to share things about your story that will make them really want to learn more. WRT your question about the group interview, its hard to answer that exactly, but you want to be the kind of person that knows how to balance being a leader in the discussion as well as being supportive of the others in the room. We run a mock session on that each cycle and its worth checking out.
21:55	mib_r5ngs0	Is a high undergrad GPA a prerequisite or does the admissions also considering factors that could

		save someone with sub-par GPA? Such as a high GPA from master studies, alternative transcript, first-gen student and so on? And what if the undergrad GPA is from non-US university, is it considered differently?
22:02	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_r5ngs0 The adcom does consider other factors such as advanced study. If you attended university outside of the US, you are viewed as a product of that educational system. Not sure what you mean by being first generation though. Do you mean US first generation?
22:03	mib_r5ngs0	Hi Judith, I meant a first university student in my family.
22:07	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_r5ngs0 So as first university student in your family you will want to share how that has shaped you and how you see yourself going forward into the MBA program. I am sure that was an important part of your experiences.
21:58	mib_c8c7bh	Hi Judith Silverman Hodara, I'm a new Wharton admitted student (yeah!). The thing is I'm an international student with a heavy entrepreneur & tech background. Do you think Wharton is a strong entrepreneur & tech program?
21:58	Jothir	Great Judith. Thank you so much.
22:02	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_c8c7bh Congratulations on being admitted. I think that Wharton does have extensive resources- I am not sure if you are considering GSB but that to me would be the other school that you would be considering, I am guessing?
22:02	alext	What are the things that the committee is looking for during the interview (both group and individual)? What are 3 things that a candidate should do/portray during the interview process to make a positive impression / achieve a high rating relative to peers?
22:05	Fortuna_Judith	@alext You will want to have an idea that could work as well as a presentation that could work. That way if you have to give up one or the other than you still have the other one to fall back on. The admissions committee is looking for how you engage with the others in the room and how well developed your idea is. They are not looking for THE BEST idea, but rather an idea that can be adopted and adapted.
22:03	mib_j9bztd	Is part time work as an independent Real Estate entrepreneur looks bad in the front of admission committee. Do they view up Real Estate experience as Bad
22:06	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_j9bztd Not sure why part time anything would be considered bad?
22:04	mib_c8c7bh	Admitted to MIT, Haas, Columbia.
22:08	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_c8c7bh Great choices.. I would also suggest that you reach out really deeply to career management and to current students. You want to make sure that whatever it is you plan to do can be supported.

22:04	mib_55pqwg	Is it disadvantageous to apply to specific concentrations (ie. health management) even if it fits with my career goals because these concentrations will likely have fewer spots available than an application with undeclared major?
22:07	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_55pqwg In my mind, there are also fewer people applying- but you really need to make sure you engage with the program before you apply. They do not like surprises.
22:05	mib_j9bztd	does asking about our Favorite Wharton teacher in the interview (both alums and admission officers) hurts?
22:09	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_j9bztd So I would probably NOT ask it that way. Many admissions officers did not go to the school, and would not have that information. I also suggest that you choose another, less obvious question. Perhaps one about experiences, instead of specific professors (please note, that as a sign of respect, they are called professors)
22:09	mib_55pqwg	Typically, there would be an opportunity for candidates to ask questions at an interview. What are some of the best questions you've heard in your role as adcom Director?
22:09	minhas3	I am an engineer and I would like some application advice. In my free time I have done some volunteer work. But I have also done many other things that I am passionate about. For example Live Djing at events, Photography, Fitness, Hiking etc. Is it any good to let these things show up in your application? Would they be viewed in negative light?
22:09	mib_c8c7bh	Thank you
22:10	mib_f1p1of	I recently read that the 80% range of GMAT scores are now in the 700-770 range.. How has the importance of GMAT shifted over the past few years in the admissions process?
22:10	mib_j9bztd	in the interview do the ad-com also test on odd ball question and how should we prepare up for it. Is there any thing that i can do up for it if they are going to ask oddball questions
22:10	mib_55pqwg	Sorry, what do you mean by engage with the program before I apply? Would you mind clarifying please?
22:11	mib_r5ngs0	Thanks for the suggestion, Judith. What is your view on alternative transcripts (such as taking 2 online classes) would admissions considered it as something carrying a weight and helping?
22:11	Fortuna_Judith	Hi everyone, I am seeing a lot of traffic from the same people. Is there anyone new that has a question they would like to ask?
22:12	Butterchicken	I have a low GPA, and I am going to enroll in MBA.Math and MBA-IQ to develop alternate transcripts. Is it a good idea to do these courses or should I look other one?
22:12	Fortuna_Judith	I am not sure what you mean, ButterChicken about “the other one”. You will want to make sure that you have stats, Finance, or accounting and I am not familiar with the classes you

		mentioned.
22:12	Butterchicken	the other one like Coursera.
22:13	Fortuna_Judith	You could also take Coursera. You may want to call the schools directly and see if they have a preference.
22:13	Leme	How is Wharton for a career in energy and sustainability domain?
22:13	Mib_j9bzt	In interview do the adcoms also test on odd ball question and how should we prepare up for it? Is there anything that I can do up for it if they are going to ask oddball questions
22:14	Kim	Judith, I did my undergraduate in the UK, and my school didn't have GPA, only Pass, Fail, High Pass. How do you recommend I submit my GPA? Should I calculate it or leave that for the admissions committee?

22:23	Fortuna_Judith	@leme There is a lot of work being done in this area, across the university. Sustainability is one of the hallmarks of the University of Pennsylvania, and you would be able to do a lot of work not just at Wharton but in collaboration with other departments. If you click on sustainability at Penn you will see a raft of opportunities
22:24	Fortuna_Judith	@mib_j9bzt The main interview is the team based discussion. The second part (10 minutes) is generally why Wharton, why now, tell me about your resume, how do you think you did on the team based interview? nothing oddball, really
22:25	mib_55pqwg	Thank you for answering our questions Judith.
22:25	Fortuna_Judith	@Kim You should leave to admissions They are really good at figuring that out. You need to put in your final grade (High Pass, etc) but they will assess the class work.
22:26	Fortuna_Judith	My pleasure.
22:26	butterchicken	does high school marks will count in any way in the admission process
22:26	Narenn1	Alright, we are closing the chat. Please stop sending new questions
22:26	Fortuna_Judith	Butterchicken, it does not
22:26	Narenn1	Thanks everyone for participating in this chat today!!
22:26	Fortuna_Judith	Thanks so much everyone
22:26	Narenn1	Thanks Judith for spending time with us and answering applicants' questions.

22:27	Narenn1	We will publish summary of this chat in Wharton forum in few days. Keep watch on this thread http://gmatclub.com/forum/topic214127.html
22:27	MRW_04072016	the mock interview session is when?
22:27	butterchicken	Thank you very much for your advice
22:27	Fortuna_Judith	It's a pleasure. You can learn more about me, and about Fortuna, at www.fortunaadmissions.com
22:27	Narenn1	If you want to know more about admission consulting services offered by Fortuna Admissions, click here http://fortunaadmissions.com/services/
22:27	Fortuna_Judith	The mock sessions are run in November and January.
22:27	MRW_04072016	thank you!
22:27	Narenn1	If we want to talk further with MBA experts at Fortuna on your application, you can avail the benefit of their free consultation http://fortunaadmissions.com/free-consultation/
22:27	Fortuna_Judith	Thanks Nareen
22:27	Narenn1	Thanks and have a great day everyone!

GMAT Club's MBA Resources

Business school Rankings	http://gmatclub.com/forum/all-2015-mba-rankings-99812.html
Admission Deadlines	http://gmatclub.com/forum/all-mba-deadlines-for-157075.html
BSchool Live Chats Schedule	http://gmatclub.com/forum/live-q-a-with-b-school-adcoms-2015-season-174827.html
Applicant Status Tracker – Real Time Updates	http://gmatclub.com/forum/applicant-tracker-feed-real-time-updates-124871.html
Executive MBA Discussions	http://gmatclub.com/forum/executive-mba-programs-345/
Part-Time MBA Discussions	http://gmatclub.com/forum/part-time-mba-programs-102/
Real and Verified BSchool Reviews	http://gmatclub.com/reviews/business_schools/?fl=menu
Compilation of Special Scholarships	http://gmatclub.com/forum/fellowships-scholarships-213768.html
Analysis - Impact of GMAT on your admission chances	http://gmatclub.com/forum/admission-rate-213025.html
Best Admission Consulting Companies	http://gmatclub.com/forum/best-admissions-consulting-companies-2016-season-205934.html
MBA Applicant Blogs	http://gmatclub.com/forum/directory-of-mba-applicant-blogs-164346.html
MBA Student Blogs	http://gmatclub.com/forum/current-student-blogs-164691.html